



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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January 4, 2008

Dear Public Water Supplier:

During the past year there have been a number of incidents involving the overfeeding of chemicals at water treatment facilities, which have resulted in a significant risk to public health. These incidents have highlighted the need for properly trained and certified staff, mechanical safeguards against overfeeds, comprehensive and redundant alarms, and adequate emergency response protocols. In response to these incidents, MassDEP has undertaken a Chemical Safety Initiative to assist with the process of risk identification and minimization. This initiative, which is being undertaken under the authority of M.G.L. Chapter 111, Section 160 and 310 CMR 22.04, includes the following:

- Chemical Feed System Survey
- Controls/Alarms Testing and Certification
- Field Verification of Controls/Alarms Protocols

Under the first phase of the initiative, MassDEP is requiring each community public water system (PWS) to perform a *Chemical Feed Safety Review Certification* as follows:

1. Review the chemical types used in the treatment plant section of the Comprehensive Report included with the 2008 Annual Statistical Report and complete the attached *Chemical Feed Safety Data Survey* form for each chemical used for disinfection, pH control, and fluoridation. If your system has multiple treatment plants you must complete one form for each chemical feed used in each treatment plant.
2. Physically test each alarm, callout, and/or interlock to ensure that it is operating correctly. Indicate date tested, name of testing individual, and whether it was operational on the *Alarm Testing* section of the survey form.
3. If your system uses an autodialer to notify staff of alarms, complete the attached *Autodialer Information* table indicating the name/location and phone number of all recipients of autodial calls.
4. Complete the *Certification* section and submit the completed survey and Annual Statistical Report to the MassDEP Boston Office **no later than February 28, 2008**.

Under the second phase of the initiative, MassDEP is requiring each community PWS to test the chemical feed system controls and alarms monthly, maintain a log of all testing for review by MassDEP, and certify to MassDEP annually as a part of the Annual Statistical Report that the testing has been completed. The purpose of this procedure is to insure that each PWS is regularly testing all controls and alarms that have been designed to protect the system from a chemical overfeed. MassDEP is working with New England Water Works Association and Massachusetts Water Works Association to make sure that training on the testing of controls and alarms is available to each PWS. If you are not sure how to test

This information is available in alternate format. Call Donald M. Gomes, ADA Coordinator at 617-556-1057. TDD Service - 1-800-298-2207.

MassDEP on the World Wide Web: <http://www.mass.gov/dep>



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your controls and alarms, you should contact the manufacturer of the equipment or the consultant who designed the chemical feed system. Testing of alarms and controls should begin in January 2008.

Under the third phase of the initiative, MassDEP will review the information provided in the survey to identify systems that may need additional safety measures. MassDEP will also review the testing logs during field audits and may require operators to demonstrate that the controls and alarms are working properly. In the meantime, MassDEP offers the following recommendations for all public water systems:

- Ensure that all personnel working on water treatment systems are properly certified.
- Consider installing additional safety equipment if your system is not currently equipped with redundant alarms or interlocks.
- Develop written emergency response procedures specifically to address malfunctions in the chemical feed systems. Ensure all staff members are trained in the procedures.

Your cooperation in completing this review is appreciated. We believe the information obtained from this process will be beneficial both to your system and MassDEP. If you have any questions, please contact the Section Chief in your region or the Boston contact as follows:

CERO: Marielle Stone at Marielle.Stone@state.ma.us or 508-767-2827

NERO: Thomas Mahin at Thomas.Mahin@state.ma.us or 508-694-3226

SERO: Richard Rondeau at Richard.Rondeau@state.ma.us or 508-946-2816

WERO: Deirdre Cabral at Deirdre.Cabral@state.ma.us or 413-694-3227

Boston: Paul Niman at Paul.Niman@state.ma.us or 617-556-1166

Very truly yours,

David Y. Terry
Program Director
Drinking Water Program

Attachment: *Chemical Feed Safety Data Survey*